Sigeric

(r. 15 August 415 – 22 August 415)

BRIEFING

Sigeric or Segeric, Sigeric also in Spanish and Portuguese, Sigeric in Catalan (towards the end of the 4th century – Barcelona , 415), was king of the Visigoths for only seven days during the year 415.

ORIGIN

According to the Spanish Biographic Dictionary, Real Academia de la Historia , Sigeric belonged to a lineage of great nobility, that of the Rosomone, which opposed the Balti dynasty and was the brother of the Visigothic General Saro.

BIOGRAPHY

When he arrived in Gaul , the king of the Visigoths , Athaulf , joined forces with the usurper Jovinus. However, the latter considered the Visigothic king too dangerous and therefore began to negotiate with Sigeric's brother, the general of Visigothic origin Sarus, who had been a collaborator of Stilicho. Athaulf, according to the Fragmenta historicorum graecorum, Volume 4, having learned of the matter, faced Sarus with about ten thousand men, defeated him and after having captured him, killed him.

Ataulf, in 415 , was assassinated in Barcelona, by a Goth in his service named Dubio, according to the Fragmenta historicorum graecorum, Volume 4, while the Chronicon Albeldense reports that he was killed by his followers *(a suis interfectus est in Barcinona)* and again the historian Jordanes tells that he died because of a sword that disemboweled him *(occubuit gladio ilia perforata Euervulfi)*; finally the bishop Idatius reports that he died, in 416, because of an internal issue among the Goths *(per quemdam Gothum apud Barcinonam inter familiars fabulas)*. Probably the murderous mission he wanted was a response to the killing committed by Ataulf years before of his brother Saro , who died at the hands of the king of the Goths during the attempted usurpation of Jovinus, in whose service his brother had placed himself.

Upon the death of Athaulf (415), a bloody struggle for power broke out between the factions that intended to continue the integration with the Romans *(among those who supported the integration was Athaulf's brother who had been designated to succeed him by Athaulf himself)* and those who were against it; the latter gained the upper hand and among these, for the succession to the throne, the factions of Sigeric first and then that of Walia stood out.

Having emerged victorious *(late summer of 415)*, Sigeric ordered the massacre of all the children that King Athaulf had had from his first marriage and inflicted the most humiliating treatment on his widow, his second wife, Galla Placidia: Galla Placidia was forced to walk twelve miles followed by Sigeric's horse, as confirmed by the Fragmenta historicorum graecorum, Volume 4.

Most likely these events, as the Spanish Biographie, Real Academia de la Historia claims , led to a violent reaction from members of the Gothic army linked to the Balts. Seven days after his royal election, as confirmed by the Fragmenta historicorum graecorum, Volume 4, Jordanes, the Chronicon Albeldense and Isidore of Seville, Sigeric, still in Barcelona, was assassinated perhaps at the instigation of his opponent in the struggle for the throne, Walia, who became the new king of the Goths.

Bishop Hydatius in his Idatii episcopi Chronicon does not mention Sigeric, but follows Athaulf with Walia.

No descendants of Sigeric are known.

NOTE

- Segeric , according to the Latin-speaking Byzantine historian Jordanes , was king of the Visigoths in 410, and succeeded Alaric I. He reigned only for a short time before being killed by his own soldiers. All other sources instead consider him the successor of Athaulf (Jordanes , De origine actibusque Getarum in Patrick J. Geary, Readings in Midieval History , p. 97).